

REGISTER OF CLASSIFICATION DECISIONS

Date of entry in Register:	13 August 1999
Name of applicant/court:	Secretary for Internal Affairs
Applicant to the Labelling Body:	Not Applicable
Title of Publication:	Topping From Below
Other Known Titles:	Not Stated
Director:	Not Applicable
Producer:	Not Applicable
Publisher:	Coronet Books
Author:	Laura Reese
Format:	Book
Country of Origin:	United Kingdom
Language:	English

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Components of film originally examined: Not Applicable.

Feature:	Running time:
Trailers:	Running time:
	Total Running time:

Excision/Alteration: Not Applicable.

Reason(s) for Excision:

Not Applicable.

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Classification Decision:

Objectionable.

Display Conditions:

Not Applicable.

Descriptive Note:

Not Applicable.

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Direction to issue a label has been given on: Not Applicable.

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SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR DECISION:

The book entitled *Topping From Below* is classified as:
Objectionable.

The publication has been classified as objectionable because it promotes and supports bestiality. The publication is a novel which concerns sado-masochistic practices. The publication contains detailed descriptions of a variety of sexual practices which include bestiality. These include the description of a woman being forced to have piglets suckle her breast while a man has rear entry vaginal intercourse with her. There are other descriptions where a man informs a woman that she has to choose between a dog and a boar as a sexual partner. There are descriptions of the difficulties either animal would pose for the woman in a sexual situation. The woman chooses the dog and the sexual activity between them is video-taped. A second woman is informed of the choice made by the first woman, the second woman is then told that she too is to have sex with the dog and in what manner. The second woman reflects on the experience of the first woman, having watched the video-tape, and of her own experience which she found exciting and sexually arousing. The publication promotes and supports bestiality by describing it in detail and by presenting it as such a sexually arousing activity for the woman that she wants to continue.

The book also makes reference to other activities which are listed in s3(2) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 including the exploitation of children for sexual purposes, the use of coercion to compel any person to submit to sexual conduct, the use of urine in association with sexual conduct, and the infliction of extreme cruelty. These matters are often described in detail, making them instructional to the reader, though the information is not presented in such a way that the publication can be considered to promote or support or tend to promote or support any of these activities. Instead, they are presented as small incidents in terms of the book's story line or from a perspective that tends to distance the reader from the impact of the activities described. While some of the descriptions are strong they are used to contrast the different reactions of two sisters to one man's sado-masochistic practices and are contextualised by the detective/thriller story line of the book.

Section 14 of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 (NZBR Act) does not apply to this book because it has been determined that s3(2) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 applies. This provision overrides the NZBR Act because it is a deeming provision which cannot be given a meaning that is consistent with the rights and freedoms of the NZBR Act.

OFLC Ref: 9900555